



Join students of all ages, from preschool to college, along with individuals across Montana in celebrating Food Day and National Farm to School Month by crunching into locally and regionally grown apples on **October 24, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. MST**.

Why crunch into apples? Haven't you heard the old saying? "An apple a day keeps the doctor away!" Apples are not only delicious, but also nutritious. They are a convenient snack and a great source of fiber that helps to keep our digestive systems healthy. Apples also have a long history here in Montana. The first apple in Montana was planted in the Bitterroot Valley in 1866. That's almost 150 years ago!

This collective crunch encourages healthy eating and supports Farm to School and Buy Local initiatives throughout the state. It is also a fun way to connect food and nutrition into all kinds of classroom curriculum, from science to art! The Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, Farm to Cafeteria Network, Montana FoodCorps, Eat Right Montana and other statewide partners have created this guide to help every Montana child crunch into a delicious apple this October!

Get Your Apples

One of the first steps in coordinating your event will be to explore your options for getting locally or regionally grown apples to your students for Montana Crunch Time. If you are school food service staff, follow the information below. If not, make sure you connect with the food service manager and/or head cook at your school to see if they are interested in being involved and can help procure the apples for your Crunch Time!

If your school qualifies, use your **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)** monies to purchase fresh apples for the Montana Crunch Time event. *Remember, FFVP is a program only certain schools are invited to participate in as it is based on schools in areas with high free and reduced percentage.*

Another option is to use the **DoD Fresh** program dollars that you must spend on fresh fruits and vegetables from the United States (specifically Montana for this event, if possible) to purchase your apples. If you choose this method, remember to place your order through FFAVORS. You only need to order several days in advance and Sysco will deliver the apples directly to your school.

You could also contact a **local grower** in your area who might be willing to sell you apples for this event. Here are some resources for connecting with local growers:

Go to your local Farmers Market and talk with area farmers. Find out who is interested in working with your school/district to provide food. For a list of Montana Farmers Markets', go to: <http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/FarmersMarkets/>

View the Montana Department of Commerce Made in Montana Directory at:
<http://www.madeinmontanausa.com/ProDir.asp>

View the Abundant Montana Directory (compiled by AERO – Alternative Energy Resources Organization) at: <http://www.aeromt.org/abundant/>

View the Farm to Cafeteria Producers Database (compiled by Farm to Cafeteria Network):
<http://farmtocafeteria.ncat.org/producer-database/>

Pose a question to other Montana food service managers on the Montana Lunchline listserv. This group has a wealth of information on sourcing local products. For more information or to be added to this list, contact Katie Bark for more information at (406) 994-5641 or kbark@mt.gov.

Connect with a nearby Montana FoodCorps service member. Although these individuals serve at a specific site, they are happy to share their knowledge of local food producers. Look on the map for the nearest one or read their lively accounts at: www.montanafoodcorps.org

Check with your distributors (SYSCO, FSA, and others) for a list of Montana products that they stock on a regular basis.

For more helpful **procurement information**, including **food safety information** and regulations:
Buying Local Food Guide, Montana Team Nutrition Program
<http://opi.mt.gov/PDF/SchoolFood/FarmToSchool/GuidePurchasingLocalFoods.docx>

Farm to Cafeteria Manual for Montana
<http://farmtocafeteria.ncat.org/>

Get to Crunch Time

The more groups and individuals you can get involved with your Crunch Time event, the more successful it will be! Recruiting helpers within the school can increase participation while simplifying the Crunch Time countdown. Enlist the help of parent volunteers for each classroom. Parents can pick up apples at a central location in the school and also assist with classroom activities. The food service staff can be a valuable resource for this project, but be sure to ask if they have the time and space to help with receiving, washing, and preparing apples.

Rally support and increase excitement for Crunch Time by holding an all-school assembly. Use this as an opportunity to ask for student and staff volunteers to act as grade-level and classroom leaders. You could also appoint Montana Crunch Time champions from each classroom. These select students can pick up apples from the school office or cafeteria for their classroom and help lead Crunch Time activities. A student club or sports team could also take the lead in promoting the event and coordinating distribution of apples.

To ensure everyone can enjoy the crunch and apples don't go to waste, consider cutting apples into halves or slices for younger students. Make Montana Crunch Time a school-wide celebration by assigning Crunch Time "buddies," putting older students in charge of delivering apples and helping to lead activities with younger students.

Don't forget to appoint a parent, teacher, or older student to act as photographer and capture all the action of Montana Crunch Time!

Connect to the Classroom

Crunching into that apple is just one part of the Montana Crunch Time experience. Apple activities can help develop language, math and science skills, and much more.

For younger students, use the apple tasting to help develop descriptive language. After students taste the apples, ask them to describe what they perceived with each of their senses. Apples are also a great way to discuss the parts of a fruit and how they grow. Check out these links for resources and more apple themed learning activities for preschool to third grade students:

http://aginmontanaschools.com/pdf/resourceGuide_all.pdf

http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/download/Fall/21712/Ed_News_Apples.pdf

For older elementary students, apples fit right into math class. To demonstrate fractions, ask students to think about all the different ways to cut their apple into even pieces. Have students list all the fractions they can create and try to develop word problems with those fractions. Apples are also "ripe" for scientific experimentation. Students can perform basic science experiments to evaluate the

ripeness and starch content of their apples. For more math, science, art and language projects aimed at fourth through sixth graders, see the links below.

http://www.ohioapples.com/pdf/4-6_teachersguide.pdf

<http://tinyurl.com/apple-utah>

Montana Crunch Time is an opportunity for middle and high school students to explore their local food system. Students can discuss the benefits of eating Montana grown food as they calculate how far their average meal has traveled to get to their plate. The apple can also be used as a visual representation of the Earth's natural resources. This demonstration is a great kickoff to any agriculture, conservation, or food system lesson.

<http://oklahoma4h.okstate.edu/aitc/lessons/upper/transport.pdf>

<http://tinyurl.com/natural-resources-utah>

This fun and informational apple poster, developed by Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center is great for all ages, and can be used in the cafeteria or classroom:

http://www.lakecountycdc.org/For_the_Cafeteria

Engage with Your Community

Montana Crunch Time is an opportunity to reach beyond the school walls and connect with the entire community. Schedule a visit to an orchard so students can see firsthand what it takes to grow apples. You could also invite an orchardist or local farmer to visit your school and share their farming experiences. Invite a food producer to come eat lunch with kids or help hand out apples they grew. Farm field trips and farmer visits are a great opportunity for teachers to cover a wide variety of subjects.

Reach out to a local dietitian or doctor and ask them to share the benefits and importance of eating fruits and vegetables. Nutrition or health professionals can share why and how an apple fits into a healthy, balanced diet. Local college students involved in nutrition or agriculture programs would be great guest speakers or activity leaders as well.

Invite a number of local community leaders to celebrate Montana Crunch Time with you. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce to connect with local business owners or invite members of the school board to your Crunch Time event. Let local newspaper and television reporters know about your event by sending a press release (see below) and invite them to come join in the fun. Anyway you can, spread the word about Montana Crunch Time and Farm to School Month!

Share Your Story

We want to see and hear students from all across our Big Sky State crunch into a Montana grown apple at the same time (2:00 p.m.)! Get out your cameras, video cameras, or phones and take a *crunch byte* from your school to share with others across the state! Be sure to submit your *crunch bytes* with signed release forms all participants captured on film or video. A release form is included below.

For More Information

Aubree Roth

Child Nutrition Education Coordinator, Montana Team Nutrition Program

Montana State Lead, National Farm to School Network

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Learn more about Farm to School in Montana at www.opi.mt.gov/Farm2School

Resources and ideas about National Farm to School Month in October: www.farmtoschoolmonth.org

Learn more about Food Day and check out the school curriculum at www.foodday.org



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

{NAME}

{SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION}

{PHONE}

{EMAIL OR OTHER CONTACT}

October 24, 2013

It's Montana Crunch Time, {TOWN/SCHOOL NAME}

{TOWN/SCHOOL NAME} is joining schools, preschools, and individuals across Montana in celebrating Food Day and National Farm to School Month by crunching into {CHOOSE: LOCALLY, REGIONALLY, ETC.} apples on Food Day, October 24th at 2:00 p.m. MST for *Montana Crunch Time*!

{PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR EVENT, ACTIVITIES, LOGISTICS, HOW PARENTS/COMMUNITY CAN BE INVOLVED}

This collective crunch encourages healthy eating and supports Farm to School and Buy Local initiatives throughout Montana. {DESCRIBE HOW IT CONNECTS LEARNING OR OTHER RELATED EFFORTS AT YOUR SCHOOL}.

For more information, or to crunch with us, please contact {CONTACT NAME} at {CONTACT PHONE AND/OR EMAIL}.

The Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, Farm to Cafeteria Network, Montana FoodCorps, Eat Right Montana and other statewide partners have created a guide to help every Montana child crunch into a delicious apple this October! For more information about Montana Crunch Time, to register and receive your guide, visit opi.mt.gov/Farm2School.

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Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent
In-state toll free 1-888-231-9393

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Montana Office of Public Instruction
OPI Contact:
P.O. Box 202501
Helena, Montana 59620-2501

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Signature: _____

(Print Name) _____

Phone number: _____

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OPI Contact: _____

Approved by State Superintendent Denise Juneau May 1, 2012